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TAGS: OPRC KMDR TU PREL KPAO
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2010

Media Highlights:

How the US Is Playing

Clinton Calls Turkish-Cypriot Leader Talat (Sabah)
TRNC President Mehmet Ali Talat said that Secretary Clinton called him last night to offer US assistance in any way in order to resolve the Cyprus issue and to congratulate him for his courage. Talat said "This was a telephone conversation reflecting increased US interest to the issue. I thanked the Secretary and told her that international interest would contribute positively to resolve the Cyprus issue."

Turkish Wife of Jordanian CIA Bomber: "Every Muslim Should Be Anti-American" (Turkish Newsweek)
In its January 17 edition, Turkish version of Newsweek carries an extended interview with Turkish citizen Defne Bayrak, the wife of Jordanian CIA bomber. She admits her husband had close interest to the "Jihadist internet sites" and expressed support for him being a suicide bomber: "It is not easy for one to blow himself up but he was going through an intellectual transformation for a long time. He always complained about lack of action against the US occupations. He always wanted to be in the Jihad areas. I respect what he did even though that his own choice. I don't believe he was ever working for the CIA. He was a strong enemy to the US, and he talked about this openly. I think every Muslim should be against America."

In the Headlines

Israel Apologizes: "Belated Common Sense" (Hurriyet)
After a day of screaming headlines condemning the undiplomatic treatment of its Ambassador to Israel, Turkish media was triumphant over the official apology, as in liberal Radikal's "Israel Says Sorry" and CNNTurk's "Ankara Satisfied, Argument with Israel Over." Media across the board treated the official apology as coming "as a result of Ankara's strong ultimatum at the highest levels." In "Belated Common Sense," mainstream Hurriyet lauds Turkey's solid stance and opines: "Israeli Deputy FM Ayalon made a formal apology which came after two earlier statements neither of which contained an apology." Israel made a "stupid move" says Milliyet while

mainstream Vatan draws attention to the Israeli President's intervention to solve the crisis: "Peres Said 'One Minute' Against Insolence." Islamist Yeni Safak also notes: "Peres Ordered and PM Netanyahu and Ayalon Wrote the Letter Together." Meanwhile, news channel NTV proclaimed: "Ayalon's Career Finished." All media carried PM Erdogan's remarks upon his return from Moscow which officially ended the crisis: "We received the response that we wanted and expected in diplomatic terms. The letter includes an expression of apology."

Commentary: The issue has become an almost sole topic for pundits. Sedat Ergin of mainstream Hurriyet characterized events as a "derailing of Turkish-Israeli relations," and notes time will be needed to put relations back on track: "All of this will make PM Erdogan even harsher than before in his Israel rhetoric." Liberal Radikal's Murat Yetkin considers the last series of events the "end of the golden era for Israel" concluding that this is a clear indication that "Israel is no longer capable of 'I can do whatever and however I want attitude.' Meanwhile, mainstream Milliyet's Asli Aydintasbas worries about the Turkish media's prevailing anti-Israeli tone, noting "these type of attitudes constitute solid ground for anti-Semitism." She disagrees with PM Erdogan's comment that "this is the kind of media I want to see" and asserts that the "Turkish media is united in hate against Israel." Islamist Yeni Safak writers Akif Emre and Fehmi Koru believe that Israel's irrational diplomacy resulted because "the government is very unhappy about Turkey's growing diplomatic power." Islamist Zaman, via its guest columnist professor Gokhan Bacik, advises "caution and calm" to the AKP government: "Turkey wants to be a regional diplomatic power but it cannot be pursued through a crisis-driven

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approach even if Ankara is one hundred percent right in its arguments."

Erdogan in Russia: Nuclear Plant Groundbreaking on November 10; Visa With Russia to be Lifted (Hurriyet, Zaman)
Today's papers give extensive front page coverage to PM Erdogan's visit to Russia where the two countries signed a deal to construct a nuclear power plant in Turkey and agreed to change the visa regime. Vatan and Haber Turk emphasize "Nuclear Plant Agreement with Russia" and Hurriyet explains that the construction will begin on November 10. Milliyet says Turkey decided to launch the initiative to award Russia with the job of constructing Turkey's first nuclear power plant without opening a new tender. Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak headlines "100 Billion USD in Five Years" and reports that the countries will raise their bilateral trade volume to 100 billion dollars in five years. Meanwhile, intellectual/Islamist oriented Zaman reports that the most concrete outcome of Erdogan's visit to Russia is the compromise reached on lifting of visa procedures mutually. The two countries will reach an agreement on lifting the visa requirement during Russian President Medvedev's visit to Turkey in May or June, adds Zaman.

Davutoglu: Turkey Can Broker Peace with Taliban (Zaman) and 'Seize the Chance' on Cyprus
Hurriyet, Haberturk, Radikal, Cumhuriyet and Zaman report before meeting with the British Foreign Secretary David Miliband in London, Foreign Minister Davutoglu told the British press Turkey might try to convince the Taliban to join the political process in Afghanistan. Papers cite The Times and Guardian as commenting "Ankara aimed to repeat its success in 2004 in convincing the Sunnis in Iraq to end their boycott of the elections." Davutoglu also said Cyprus peace talks had reached a "critical stage," that the Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders had met 60 times, and that "guarantor powers" Britain and Turkey should seize the chance to pin down a comprehensive settlement. Mainstream Haberturk comments Davutoglu's proposal "surprised" the West, whereas leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet says Britain "partially agrees" with the view, albeit putting a distinction between the moderates and radicals within the Taliban.

Ihsanoglu: Yemen Can Become a Second Afghanistan (Zaman)
The Turkish Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, visiting New York as the guest of Ban Ki-Moon, told the Islamist-oriented Zaman that Yemen

was prone to become a "second Afghanistan." "Geographically, Yemen is suitable for illegal activities. Infiltrations of terrorist groups hardens the situation of the existing structures in the country," said Ihsanoglu. He warned that the "distresses" should not spread in Yemen, which would jeopardize its territorial integrity. Ihsanoglu also noted the reasons why terror was not rooted in Turkey, Indonesia and Senegal were multi-party democracy and the lack of "extremist interpretations" of religion.

Jenkins Insolently Accuses Turks of Having 'Psychotic Problems' (Sabah)

British journalist and analyst Gareth Jenkins, who is based in Istanbul, told political observers at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington on Tuesday that Americans should watch DVDs of "Valley of the Wolves" in order to see a lot of the psychotic problems Turkish society has. According to Jenkins the psychotic elements in the TV series include a large amount of Ottoman nostalgia, Turkish racial supremacy and even anti-Semitism. When he was asked about the recent tensions between Turkey and Israel, Jenkins said "There was always anti-Semitism in Turkey and this increased remarkably last few years." Following Jenkins' remarks, an official from the Turkish Embassy in Washington verbally reacted to Jenkins by saying "these remarks are unacceptable," adds Sabah.

Migration of Jews from Turkey to Israel Increase Tenfold (NTV website)

NTV website held a phone interview with Eyal Peretz, the head of

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Turkish Jews' Society in Israel. Peretz said over the past ten years, an average of 60 Jews emigrated from Turkey to Israel, but in 2009, 600 came for good, marking a ten-fold increase. He said the main reasons for the migration were the "disillusionment" of Jews living in Turkey, the "anti-Jewish" rallies in the country and the incidents that took place between the two countries last year.

"Emigration to Israel has increased naturally in the face of the burning of Israeli flags in Istanbul, the Turkish PM calling Turkey's Jews as 'guests,' and other rising anti-Jewish developments," said Peretz. Peretz also said they wrote a letter of apology to Turkey's Tel Aviv Embassy after the humiliation of Ambassador Celikkol. "This incident has given the Turkish people a wrong impression on the Israeli people, just in the sense that The Valley of The Wolves and Separation serials stoked a rise in the extreme views held against the Jewish congregation in Turkey," emphasized Peretz.

Haiti Razed to the Ground (Milliyet)

Front pages of newspapers feature photos and strong headlines about Haiti's devastating earthquake on Tuesday highlighting the loss of life and massive damage to landmark sites such as the official palace and the United Nation's building. In a front page banner headline "Haiti Cries," mainstream Sabah says the "Haitian PM estimated that tens of thousands of people have died in the aftermath of the earthquake," and notes "around 140 of the UN employees in Haiti, including the mission's leader, remained trapped under the rubble after Tuesday's massive earthquake." Mainstream Hurriyet in "One Minute Nightmare. Earthquake Destroys Haiti's Capital," highlights that "the US and other countries mobilized a huge rescue and relief effort to assist the quake-hit Haiti. President Obama rushes aid to Haiti and orders a sweeping military and civilian operation while World Bank pledges \$100million. Turkish Red Crescent sends a leader team to the region to help with rescue efforts." Liberal Radikal headline reads, "7 Magnitude Earthquake Razes Haiti," while mainstream Milliyet says "7.0 earthquake was the largest recorded in Haiti since 1770." In "Earthquake Strikes People Depending on Muddy Bread," Islamist Yeni Safak focuses on the people and says "the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere with its people making bread out of mud, was hit by the biggest earthquake in 200 years." All papers note "Turkish General Directorate of Security said that 52 Turkish policemen assigned to the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) were reported to be in good condition in the wake of the earthquake in Haiti."

Greek and Turkish Boats Collide in Kardak: CNNTurk and online outlets report that a Greek and Turkish coastguard ships collided on 1/13 off the coast of Kardak (Ima) and quote Greek state broadcaster

ERT that the Greek side considered the collision "unimportant," and that Greek officials reached out to Turkish counterparts regarding the mishap.

TV Spotlight (CNN Turk)

Six people have been arrested in security operations against the PKK's arm KCK in the provinces of Bingol and Hakkari.

Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir has been banned by court from leaving Turkey temporarily in connection with an investigation against the PKK/KCK.

The ruling AK Party Women's Branch has invited Secretary Clinton to join March 8 World Women's Day activities in Turkey.

Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture activities will be launched with a formal ceremony on January 16.

The first round of intensified talks in Cyprus has failed to produce results.

Greek PM Papandreou said he will give a positive response to the letter PM Erdogan sent on October 30, and will arrange a meeting

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with the Turkish leader.

Yemeni security forces killed a suspected al-Qaeda leader in a raid on a house in the Shabwa province.

Norway has apologized for the death of a Turkish woman whose son was beaten by the Norwegian police. The issue will be taken to the Turkish parliament's agenda.

JEFFREY